COVID closures, wildfires, last minute changes to teaching schedules....It's been an undeniably bumpy ride over the last few months and it looks like the ride isn't over. As we move into the fall term and get used to face masks and plexiglass partitions as the norm, I'm reminded more and more about how important a good book is in difficult times. A good book helps students escape their reality, which can be transformative when reality is just someplace they don't want to be right then. It's characters can be friends when real friends are out of touch. It's knowledge can open possibilities not previously realized, or can help when dealing with intense emotions. Our library learning commons programs will continue to function differently this year, but I believe our efforts to continue to connect students with books will have a profound impact on many lives.
The BCTLA Conference Committee is excited to present our annual fall conference this year in an entirely online format.

The conference will feature sessions for new and seasoned TLs alike, with practical ideas participants can take back to their LLCs and put into practice right away. Vendors will also offer online sessions.

Participants can also choose to attend an author’s panel, featuring local graphic novelists, Cale Atkinson, Zoe Si & Faith Erin Hicks.

The conference will kick off at 7pm on Thursday, Oct. 22 with an online Social & Awards night.

To register, visit [https://bctla.ourconference.ca/](https://bctla.ourconference.ca/)

Our keynote speaker this year is Rebeca Rubio, an educator, Teacher Librarian, consultant and District Curriculum Coordinator for Libraries and Information Services in SD38 (Richmond). She supports Teacher Librarians in developing programs, redesigning flexible spaces and developing culturally responsive Library Learning Commons programs. She is actively engaged in exploring student engagement, multiple literacies and diversity and equity in LLCs.

Her keynote, entitled *Library Learning Commons’ as Brave Spaces*, envisions LLCs as places that value and promote equity and advocate for access and inclusion. Rubio will begin by outlining the incredible job TLs did in preserving LLC programs during remote learning by highlighting examples of TL practice around the province. She will then shift to address equity. According to Rubio, as remote learning became a reality, "At our core, we (TLs) knew that this new reality highlighted inequalities, and as champions of equity, we advocated for access and inclusion. As we move forward in this year of uncertainty, our equity work continues, because our influence is far reaching and our work is not neutral. Our LLCs have always been safe spaces, yet they have the potential to become brave spaces. Brave spaces ensure that every patron sees themselves represented; brave spaces actively work to dismantle injustices; brave spaces encourage dialogue and play an important role in raising critically conscious and active citizens. Equity is not something we “do” every once in a while, but rather the lens through which we intentionally plan and carry out our vision in an inclusive, equitable and brave Library Learning Commons.”

**Our panelists**

**Cale Atkinson**
Author of *Unicorns 101*, *Where Oliver Fits*, *To the Sea*, *Off and Away*, and *Sir Simon: Super Scarier*.

**Zoe Si**
Author of *Wolfie and Fly*

**Faith Erin Hicks**
Author of *Pumpkin Heads* & *One Year at Ellsmere*
School Reopening

On September 3, the province released updated Health and Safety Guidelines for K-12 schools. This document includes specific guidelines for School Library Learning Commons’ spaces, including that, "School libraries/learning commons facilities should be open and book exchange can continue to occur during stages 1 to 4."

The BCTLA has also updated its LLC reopening document. The BCTLA Recommendations for Access to Library Learning Commons Resources to Meet Covid-19 Requirements document can be found on our website.

Chapter Grants

Grants are available to BCTLA Chapters to support initiatives such as member outreach or professional development. Grant forms can be found on our website under Chapter Services, or by clicking on this direct link: https://bctla.ca/chapter-services/chapter-grants/.

AGM

The BCTLA Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 6th at 7 pm. This year’s meeting will be entirely online. A link to the meeting will be sent to chapter councilors soon.

Voting will take place via Google Forms during the meeting. All positions are open and members can nominate others or themselves, as well as run for election on the day of the meeting. A list of positions and descriptions of related duties can be seen at https://bctla.ca/about/executive-roles/.

Nominations can be sent to psac49@bctf.ca.

DEAR

Drop Everything and Read day is coming up on Monday, October 26th. Promotional posters will be available on our website soon.

Do you have a story to share?

The BCTLA is looking for stories from our members to feature in our newsletters and on our website. If you have a story to share, please email us at psac49@bctf.ca.